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Goals for Strengthening Partnerships

Clarify goals for strengthening partnerships. For each goal, list the steps involved, person or people responsible, and the resources or materials needed. You may wish to identify several shorter and longer term goals.

Goals	Steps Involved	Who is Responsible	Resources Needed
Address gaps and needs in current programming			
Improve and supplement existing programming to ensure youth have access to real-world experiences and additional caring and committed adults			
Secure and utilize financial, material, and people-specific resources that may be limited or non-existent			
Expose youth to the larger community to better understand its strengths and needs			
Provide youth with experiences and community connections that could lead to future life and career opportunities			
Other:			

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Determine Needs

Talk with program stakeholders Talk with program stakeholders, such as staff, students, parents, school-day teachers, and principals to figure out what the program is missing and how existing program elements could be improved. First, go through the list of questions and record ideas in the notes section. You may wish to pick a few questions to focus on. Next, begin to identify partnership ideas. For example, if family engagement has been identified as an area of need, what are some ideas for partnerships that may help in this category.

Determining Program Needs	Notes	Partnership Ideas
When comparing our program with other high-quality OST programs, what do we lack?		
What resources (people, places, things, time, money, etc.) could improve academically-focused programming?		
What resources (people, places, things, time, money, etc.) could improve enrichment-focused programming?		
How could staff professional development be improved or expanded?		
How could the community be more involved?		
How could academic and enrichment elements be better integrated?		
What past or current programming efforts should be replicated or improved?		
How could program space be improved and/or supplemented?		
How could families be more involved?		

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Determining Program Needs	Notes	Partnership Ideas
What resources could better support youth's social and emotional growth?		
How could program evaluation and assessment be improved?		
In what ways could community members better understand program goals and effectiveness?		
How could youth's health and nutrition needs be better addressed?		
In what ways can youth with special needs (language, physical, etc.) be better supported?		
Other		

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Identify Partners

Partners can be a person or place or just about anything else in between. To best utilize potential partners, you need to have a clear sense of what's out there. Under details, list the names of potential partners, and contact information if you have it. Under partnership ideas, note ways the partners could become involved in your program. Be as specific as possible.

	Details	**Partnership Ideas**
COMMUNITY LEADERS		
Business		
Religious		
Political		
Long-term residents		
Philanthropists		
OTHER		
PLACES		
Parks		
Zoos		
Museums		
Popular meeting places		
Restaurants		
Colleges and universities		
Concert venues		
OTHER		
GROUPS		
Political		
Arts-related		
Service-oriented		
Community-centered		
OTHER		
COMMUNITY SERVICES		
Government-related		
Non-profit organizations		
Charities		
Education- and training-related		
OTHER		

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	Details	**Partnership Ideas**
INDUSTRY		
Small businesses		
Large corporations		
Family-owned businesses		
Trade groups and unions		
OTHER		
SOURCES OF INFORMATION		
Newsletters		
Websites		
News organizations		
Listservs		
Chamber of Commerce		
OTHER		

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Maintaining Partnerships

Maintaining successful partnerships requires building a strong relationship. This involves ongoing communication, keeping information up to date, and recognizing partners' contributions. Identify which of the strategies below you will use to maintain successful partnerships. Personalize the strategies as necessary, then develop a plan for how they will be implemented.

Strategy	Steps Involved	Who Will be Responsible	Resources Needed
Establish Ongoing Communication			
Electronic – emails, calendars, shared documents, etc.			
Face-to-face meetings – at the program site, at the partner's site, other			
Mailbox system			
Phone check-in's			
Use web-based tools such as Google Docs			
Keep Information Up To Date			
Identify appropriate contact people			
Several times a year, verify important information is correct			
Share partner information with program staff, school-day staff, parents and students as needed			
Honor Partners' Contributions			
Newsletter shout-out			

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Strategy	Steps Involved	Who Will be Responsible	Resources Needed
Youth-made cards or treats			
Phone call, letter, email, etc.			
Awards ceremony			
Bulletin boards			
Gift certificates			
OTHER			

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Strengthening program partnerships takes staff time and attention to detail. Coach and assist staff in their work with partners to ensure all sides have a positive and productive experience. The checklist below can be used for staff as a whole, or modified to be used for individual staff members. Also see the student checklist on the next page to gauge your overall success with partnerships as related to student outcomes.

STAFF CHECKLIST

Recognize program gaps and needs	Strong	OK	Needs work
Ask youth about ways to improve the program			
Frequently reflect and offer suggestions for improvement			
Be aware of other program models and propose ways to integrate best practices			
Check-in with stakeholders regarding program improvement ideas			
Compare past programming experiences with current ones			
Identify partners			
Tap into partners' personal networks and connections			
Assess whether partners would be a good fit			
Think about ways to pull in partners to current and future projects and programming			
Reflect on experiences with past partners			
Refer youth to resources			
Recruit partners			
Effectively share program vision and mission with partners			
Help partners understand that their time and resources will be valued			
Utilize partnership agreements or MOUs as necessary to clarify roles and responsibilities			
Ask partners what they want out of the experience			

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Recognize program gaps and needs	Strong	OK	Needs work
Maintain partnerships			
Find ways to honor partners publicly and privately			
Utilize check-in strategies with partners to monitor the partnership's effectiveness			
Revise partnership agreements or MOUs as needed to respond to changing circumstances or needs			
Effectively manage and oversee partners to ensure goals are achieved			

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STUDENT CHECKLIST

Children and Youth…	Strong	OK	Needs work
Enjoy working with partners/partner organizations			
Have a better sense of organizations, key leaders, and opportunities in the community			
Experience enhanced or expanded programming experiences due to the work of partners			
Connect with more caring adults			
See new career pathways and education and experience needed to achieve them			
Feel comfortable sharing their thoughts, feedback, and suggestions with partners			
Understand partners' role in programming or a particular project			
Enjoy working with partners/partner organizations			
Have a better sense of organizations, key leaders, and opportunities in the community			
Experience enhanced or expanded programming experiences due to the work of partners			
Connect with more caring adults			
See new career pathways and education and experience needed to achieve them			
Feel comfortable sharing their thoughts, feedback, and suggestions with partners			
Understand partners' role in programming or a particular project			

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